


# City of Alexandria, Virginia

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** JUNE 13, 2018

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER 

**SUBJECT:** MONTGOMERY STREET UPDATE

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The purpose of this memo is to provide City Council with an update on the future Council policy choice of whether or not to convert Montgomery Street to two-way which is proposed in the adopted Old Town North Small Area Plan.

Given City Council guidance during adoption of the plan and, more recently, in March 2018 while considering a developer contribution policy, it is staff's recommendation to initiate a focused community engagement process on Montgomery Street in FY 2020. The process would begin with an updated traffic analysis which staff contemplates to begin one year after occupation of the Edens Giant/ABC site development. Staff will consider funding for this traffic analysis and community outreach in the FY2020 budget as such an effort was not previously contemplated. Assuming the schedule for completion of Edens holds and the City Manager recommends, and Council approves funding for a study, the next steps would be:

1. Summer/fall 2019: Completion of Edens development
2. Fall/winter 2019-2020: Commencement of traffic study
3. Winter/spring 2020: Community outreach process
4. Late 2020 or early 2021: Traffic and Parking Board and City Council consideration (if needed) of Montgomery Street conversion

**BACKGROUND:** As part of the Old Town North Small Area planning process, a traffic study was conducted to evaluate future traffic volumes and potential modifications to the roadway based on existing and planned development. One proposal was to convert Montgomery Street from one-way to two-way to make it a more pedestrian-oriented street, enhance the street as a retail corridor and provide options for access to the commercial uses in Old Town North. Montgomery Street and Saint Asaph Streets are planned as the primary retail corridors within the Old Town North Small Area Plan. (See attachment.)

The issue of the conversion of Montgomery Street was raised during the week-long community charrette process as part of the Old Town North Small Area Plan. As part of the public hearing and approval of the Small Area Plan on June 24, 2017, a number of residents spoke in opposition to the proposed conversion of Montgomery Street. Some community members expressed a desire for this decision to be made after completion of the Edens project in order to have a more accurate assessment of the additional traffic volumes and the impact they would have on the proposed street conversion.

After the public testimony, the following recommendation was added to the Old Town North Small Area plan:

*Evaluate the feasibility of converting Montgomery Street from a one-way street to a two-way street, with parking generally on each side of the street between North Henry Street and North Fairfax Street, and there will be good faith to work with the community. As part of the conversion of the street from a one-way street to a two-way street, loading for existing businesses and future development will be evaluated and addressed.*

Also, as part of the recent approval of the developer contributions policy for Old Town North by City Council on March 17, 2018 it was clarified that the approval of the developer contributions, in no way committed the City to converting Montgomery Street from one-way to two-way. Rather, this issue would be discussed as part of a future community process and would require a future decision by City Council. As part of this public hearing, community members testified regarding their concern pertaining to the proposed conversion of Montgomery Street.

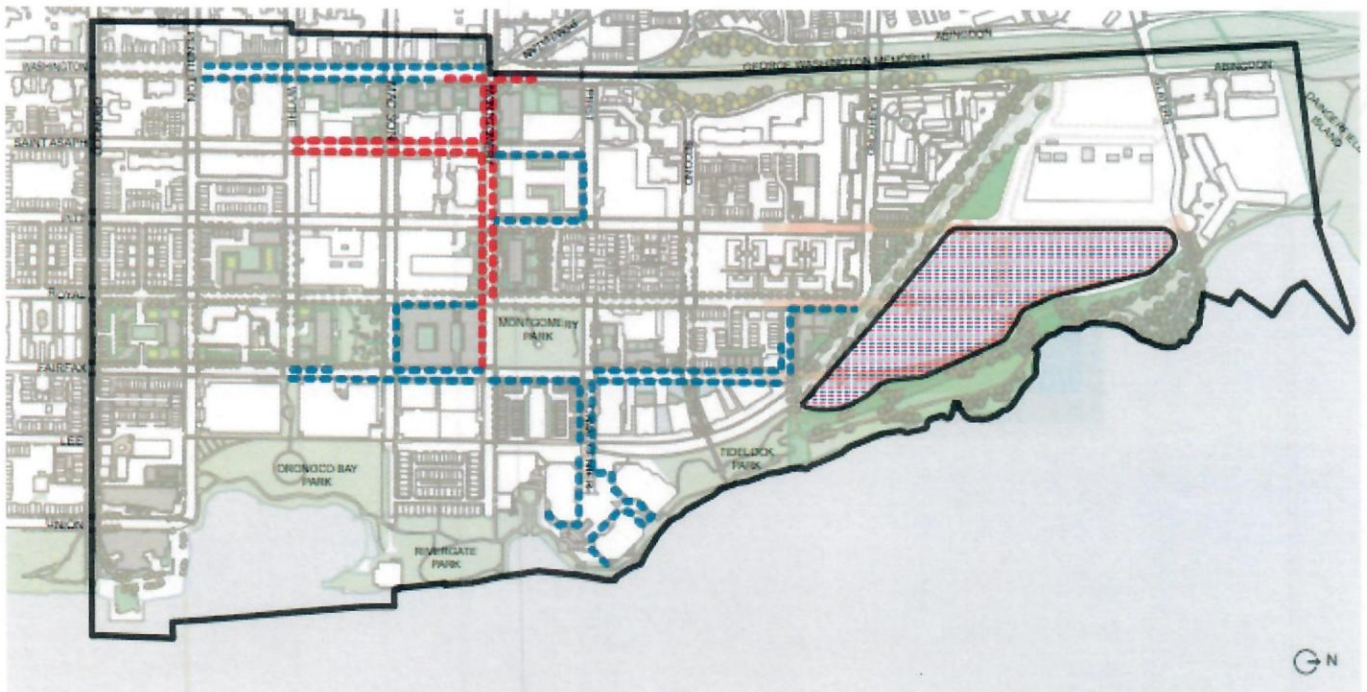
**DISCUSSION:** Based on input from City Council, some members of the community and the recommendation in the Old Town North Small Area plan, staff is recommending that a future analysis of the potential conversion of Montgomery Street to two-way take place after the Edens development is occupied and additional traffic analysis can be conducted and used to reevaluate the proposal. The Edens development is currently scheduled for completion in summer/fall 2019. In addition, there are a number of office building to residential conversions that may occur in Old Town North that may change traffic patterns.

At that time, staff will determine the feasibility of the two-way conversion and present the findings to the community for discussion. Staff will then use input from this future process to make a recommendation to the Traffic and Parking Board and City Council. In conclusion, staff recommends:

1. The Edens development be completed and occupied for approximately one year before traffic counts are collected to evaluate potential conversion of Montgomery Street
2. Following the traffic analysis along and near the corridor, a community process will occur to consider the analysis and the potential conversion of Montgomery Street
3. Following the analysis and community input, staff will provide a recommendation for consideration by the Traffic and Parking Board and City Council

cc: Emily A. Baker, Deputy City Manager  
Yon Lambert, Director, Transportation and Environmental Services  
Karl Moritz, Director, Planning and Zoning  
Hillary Orr, Deputy Director, Transportation and Environmental Services  
Jeffrey Farner, Deputy Director, Planning and Zoning

## Attachment



### LEGEND

- - - - - Required Retail or Arts and Cultural Uses
- - - - - Optional Retail or Arts and Cultural Uses
- Area for Retail or Arts and Cultural Uses

### Note:

The final location and amount of retail or arts and cultural uses for the former power plant site will be established as part of the Coordinated Development District (CDD) approval(s) for the site.